



## **A safe way to get rid of old medication**

Most people have old, unused medication in their homes and aren't sure how to dispose of them. There is a way to keep medications away from children and pets without harming the environment.

- Use a drug take-back program. The Medicine Return Program in Washington State has 37 locations in six counties. Take your unwanted medicine to one of the Group Health or Bartell Drugs locations that offer this service. Note that they cannot take controlled substances, such as Oxycontin, Vicodin, etc. For more information and locations, see [www.medicinereturn.com](http://www.medicinereturn.com)
- Do not flush medicine down the toilet or drain. Flushing drugs adds to pollution in our waters because wastewater and septic systems are not designed to treat these chemicals. Pharmaceuticals are showing up in Puget Sound.
- Putting unwanted medicines in the trash is better than flushing, but it is not the best solution to protect people and the environment. To keep medication away from children, pets, and others who might access drugs, mix the medications with an undesirable substance, such as cat litter, and put into a container with a lid. Remove personal information and place the sealed container in the trash.
- Needles are not accepted by the Medicine Return Program, but they can be put in the garbage if they are in a rigid, puncture-proof container no larger than one-gallon. A one-gallon milk jug or a two-liter pop bottle is acceptable when capped, taped and labeled "Do Not Recycle." For more information, call Allied Waste at 425-452-4762.